20: Wallace H-4,5 (1945) 1953 NO6 Comanche NO6

make the cultural transition they have been called upon to accomplish. As a result of its work, many tribal superstitutions are being discarded for modern scientific concepts. Although hardly a Comanche would accept a white physician at the beginning of the reservation period, the Indian practitioner today is almost a forgotten man.

The Comanches are still confronted with many sociological and psychological problems of adjustment. They have not entirely disintegrated, nor have they been completely assimilated. They are still Indian and want to follow the Indian pattern; their environment, experience, and teaching encourages them to discard it. They are intensely proud of being Comanche, and cherish their cultural heritage. They feel that they were unjustly robbed of their homeland, but know that they must make the best of their situation. The conflict between the old and the new often prevents the acceptance of any regular pattern of conduct and leads to confusion or unusual situations.

The matter of custom is vital to the Comanches. It is difficult to discard tradition. Some old women still wear their blankets, and a few old men continue to paint their faces and to wear their hair in plaits. The tradition of generosity does not fit well in American society for it is an impediment to economic security. Their idea of a pleasant life does not include saving, because saving had no place in their primitive society. The give-away dance has not entirely disappeared, and those who give are the losers and afterwards may seek the aid of the government.

There still exists a strong incentive toward the glorification of the individual. This character trait was a regular feature of the old social system, where the aim of the warrior was to gain glory and where there was constant acknowledgment of his achievements. It led to an immense sensitiveness to praise and censure. The Comanches, as a result, require more praise than the white man to function, and they suffer more than the white man from censure. The attitude was readily apparent in 1945. More than two hun-

32: Gilles O,X-3 (1902-c.1910) 1974
NO6 Comanche NO6
Oklahoma

Wer-que-yah's camp sat a ways to the west of the trading post, in a small grove of blackjack trees. When I rode up, he was apparently pleased to see me. I was to learn that this was the general attitude of all our Indian customers—glad we were collecting so their credit would be good until another payment. Putting away what they owed until they came home and paid us was too great a problem for them to cope with. Should they remain camped there till the rest of their money was gone, they would spend the money they were saving for our account.

Before leaving the store that morning, I took a small memo book and copied the amount each Indian owed as shown by the ledger. I believe there were only fifteen accounts in this first payment. After we shook hands, I got out my little book and started to tell Wer-que-yah how much he owed.

Then his manner changed. He seemed bothered and was no longer smiling. He began telling me to wait, "his house," for *tiwa* (white man), "then I pay." On foot, he hurried toward the south, across a bit of a swag in the prairie. I could see him all the way till he entered a tent. He came out quickly. With him was the little Baptist missionary —well-trimmed Prince Albert whiskers and all.

Whenever I had met him, the missionary had had a calm, friendly, but dignified manner. But I realized as they approached now that both he and the Indian were of solemn mien. Reverend Deyo carried a small tablet and a pencil. Almost at once, he asked, "How much do you claim this man owes you?"

I took out my little memorandum book again and showed him the amount opposite Wer-que-yah's name—I believe it was slightly over $59.00—and he wrote it down at the top of his tablet. "I asked this Indian to keep his duplicate sales slips," he told me. "I want to see how their total compares."

I was busy thinking, while my customer went over to his hack and secured a woman's old purse that had long since lost both its shape and its looks. I was wondering what sort of a box the preacher and the Indian were trying to put me in. Supposing he hadn't kept all of the slips? Suppose he was honest, but had lost some? Maybe we hadn't always given him a duplicate!

The slips were rolled up endwise and tied with a strip of bed ticking. We untied them and straightened them out, and I started reading the total of each. The minister wrote them down in a column.